

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-10 are all the claims pending in the application.

Claims 1-10 stand rejected as being unpatentable under § 103(a) over Poussin (US 5, 202,097).

In response, Applicant submit Poussin fails to disclose, at least, “an external shell comprising at least a catalytic bed (6) loaded with a volume of catalyst and provided with a gas inlet perforated cylindrical wall (7) and a gas outlet perforated cylindrical wall (8),” and “loading the catalytic bed with a volume of catalyst smaller than said volume of catalyst,” as recited in claim 1.

Rather, Poussin merely discloses using a single catalysis of a single volume. Thus, no such feature is disclosed. Accordingly, Applicants submit claim 1 is allowable for at least this reason. Additionally, Applicant submits claims 2-5 are allowable, at least by virtue of their dependency.

Secondly, Applicants submit Poussin fails to disclose, at least, “wherein the catalytic bed is not closed at the top so as to allow for the passage of reaction gases,” as recited in claim 6.

Rather, Poussin discloses the use of a layer of material 19 (*see* FIG. 1). Further, Poussin discloses that this layer 19 is covered with a first thickness of balls 11 and a second thickness of balls 10, which “contribute to giving an axial sealing to the bed.” (col. 7, lines 46-56).

Thus, Applicants submit claim 6 is allowable for at least this reason. Additionally, Applicants submit claims 7-10 are allowable, at least by virtue of their dependency.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.114(c)  
U.S. Application No.: 09/231,791

Attorney Docket No.: Q52856

**Conclusion**

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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CUSTOMER NUMBER

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